

REMARKS:

Claim 1-10 are in the case and have been allowed.

In reply to the Examiner's requirements the Abstract has been corrected and a corrected substitute specification has been provided.

The following references have been cited in a relevant Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-49047 and were brought to the attention of the undersigned on October 30, 2008. The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the following comments concerning these material references and the attached IDS and form PTO/SB/08A separately listing these references.

Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 58-133316

This document discloses a rotary type heat treating furnace that includes: a furnace body 1 having a heating element 12 and a heating furnace bottom 3; compartments 6 into or out of which works can be conveyed by the opening or closing of a bottom cover; and a recirculation fan 23 disposed near a roof. An atmosphere gas heated by a heater 22 disposed on a furnace wall is recirculated around the compartments (containers for accommodating works) 6. Each of the compartments is uniformly heated by the convection heating.

Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 09-042834

This document discloses a drying furnace. The drying furnace includes a circular

stocker frame 8 rotatably that holds many component baskets 12 radially and vertically in plural layers. Using hot air supply/exhaust passages provided in the four corners of a square hot air circulation furnace body surrounding the stocker frame 8, the drying furnace recirculates a hot air diagonally across the furnace body, thereby drying the components or suchlike accommodated in each layer of the component baskets 12 vertically held in the stocker frame.

Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 2000-349103

This document discloses a thermostatic chamber (shown in FIG. 5) for curing semiconductors. This thermostatic chamber includes a carry-in opening 22a and a carry-out opening 22b disposed in different walls of the square thermostatic chamber 22 separately. The carry-in opening 22a and the carry-out opening 22b have a carry-in unit 24 and a carry-out unit 26 respectively for magazine cases 11 accommodating semiconductors.

Japanese Utility Model Application Publication No. 39-2660

This document discloses a preheating furnace. In the preheat furnace, a space above a circular rack 3 supported by a rotary shaft 2 is divided into a number of small sections "c" by a number of vertical blades 5 radially attached to the rotary shaft 2. The small section "c" moves to a furnace opening "b" while heating the pieces of metal in order to make resin coating of the metal by radiant heat generated by an electric heater 4 disposed below the rack 3. A door 7 is opened for every small section "c" and the metal after heat treating is taken out.

Japanese Utility Model Application Laid-Open No. 58-121363

This document discloses a rotary hearth type heat treating furnace. Heating products 7 are accommodated in pots 8 which are arranged radially at regular intervals on an annular rotating hearth 3 and is rotated in furnace. In the meantime, the heating products 7 pass through three types of chambers, namely, preheating chambers 10, 11, a heating chamber 12, and cooling chambers 13, 14 in that order. In this heat treating furnace, the cooling chambers 13, 14 and the preheating chambers 10, 11 are connected by ducts 16, 17, and an atmosphere gas is circulated between the cooling chambers 13, 14 and the preheating chambers 10, 11 by a circulating fan 18. Pots 8 heated by radiation heat generated by an electric heater 20 in the heating chamber are cooled by the circulating fluid in the cooling chambers 13, 14. On the other hand, heat deprived from the pots 8 is introduced to the preheating chambers 10, 11 and utilized to preheat the pots 8.

Entry of this amendment, consideration of the IDS and further favorable action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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